

a moral and religious force which if directed in the proper channel would effect a mighty revolution. If the church press would as a unit espouse this temperance reform with that energy, that enthusiasm and that perseverance which belongs to the discharge of a divine mission, this generation would celebrate the splendid triumph of this cause of humanity, and hell would remove her darkest shadow from the history of the world and from the souls of men. Let this statement burn down deep into every soul, for indirectly, the constituency of the press, is partly responsible for the sentiment of the church paper on the question of temperance. More than once we have heard the confident assertion that if every professing Christian would renounce the saloon and vote on every occasion for its extinction, employing at the same time his influence with others in behalf of the same object, that this abomination would instantly go down into richly merited defeat and ruin. Let us go behind this statement with all its implication of shame upon him who dares to name Christ with a rum polluted breath, or take the holy communion with a saloon stained hand, and let us say that if the entire religious press would do its manifest duty and rouse the sleeping conscience of the church, and kindle the universal fires of Christian zeal, then would the saloon quickly go down before a storm of righteous indignation, and the strong angel with the great chain in his hand, and the key of the bottomless pit, would do his mission upon its diabolical carcass. An enthusiastic temperance man said that he wondered why God did not send his lightnings and smite every rum-seller and every saloon. Another answered that God had lightnings enough, what he wanted was conductors. That is what God is waiting for. He has the thunder and he has the lightning, and he will strike the fatal blow when the conductors are supplied. That is our part of the work. When the religious press has awakened to a full sense of its missions and its responsibility, when along with the pulpit it has done its work of education, and the development of sentiment, when the Christian church with all its agencies will have supplied the "conductors," when every male member of the church above twenty one years of age, will have attained to that Christian manhood when he will dare, in the face of the devil and all his agents, walk to the polls and cast a ballot for God and humanity, then God will send the lightning, and the thunder, and the saloon will be no more, for when once we get at the liquor traffic with votes, its friends will never know whether it was lightning or dynamite that struck it.

But how are we to arouse the religious press to a sense of its duty in respect of the temperance reform? There is a question in regard to the secular press whether its chief function is to reflect public sentiment or to mould it; whether it should lead or follow. Secular papers may obsequiously seek to discover the popular drift and to pander to the popular taste, but this nerveless and merciless policy should never be charged against the religious press. We doubt even if that is the right of the secular press. Every secular paper should be a moulder of proper sentiment, not only as it concerns the temperance question, but all moral questions and reforms. If our local papers would do their duty, the police force would cost far less than it does. The moral sentiment would be stronger, men would cease advocating

the license of houses of prostitution, and the introduction of new saloons, gambling halls, the awful shocking impurities of men and women, would stir society to the center and wring from it a protest that would be felt thru out the entire community. Naturally the secular paper is more handicapped than the religious press, but too often both are in the position of the colored boy when he said, "the one is afraid and the other darsent." What would we think of a pastor who sought only to echo the opinions, the feelings and the tastes of his congregation, putting in a secondary place, or totally obscuring, the right and the truth, thus surrendering that initiative and that leadership which is the privilege, the duty and the opportunity of the preacher. The same reprehension rests upon a pusillanimous and servile religious press which will not emphasize the temperance reform for fear of offending some of its patrons and reducing its revenues. If we could but persuade them that interest lies in the direction of duty, perhaps this double incentive might reinforce their hesitating courage.

Discussion may arise as to what form of the temperance movement the press should espouse, and it may not be too much to say that refuge from responsibility in the main premises has been sought in disagreement as to the methods proposed. But the question of method is really a matter of secondary importance. It goes for the saying that the saloon should be attacked in the stronghold of its power, but whether this can be best accomplished by besieging its Santiago, or its Havana, may safely be left to that instinct of strategy, that sagacity of battle, which shall come when all the energies of the Christian church are marshalled. Attack somewhere. Strike whichever head of the hydra appears to be nearer you, or more instinct with its baleful vitality.

But the great work of the hour is to arouse the conscience of the church. When Danton was asked how to advance the fortunes of the young republic in the face of its numerous and powerful enemies, he replied, "By audacity, and again I say, audacity, and always audacity." We would give like watchword to the wavering hosts of the religious press in the struggle against the gigantic iniquity of the saloon. Let us agitate, and again agitate, and always agitate. Let there be a union of the forces of right against this enemy of the church and all that is good and pure in our civilization. Let the pulpit and press keep up the agitation, sow the seed of divine truth in the hearts of the young, mould public opinion, for these are the dynamite that will eventually tear up root and branch, this awful curse and scatter it to the four corners of the earth; then will the chariot wheel of Christianity roll on unmolested by this demon, and from the north and the south, from the east and the west, we shall soon hear the marching of the millions when the armies of the Lord shall come up against this enemy of man, and trample it forever into the dust. And there shall be a new birth of human freedom, a new heaven of hope and joy, and a new earth wherein shall dwell peace and righteousness.

Men who live in recklessness and sin do not know what judgment may be at their gates, nor how soon and in what manner it may come upon them.